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ABSTRACT

Society suffers from the underutilization of more than half of the talents available to educational administration because of discriminatory attitudes against women which are reinforced in the school setting. Indeed, a 1970-71 nationwide survey showed that while 67% of all public school teachers were women, women held only 15% of the school principal positions. Similarly, a study of 37 randomly selected community colleges in six states (California, Illinois, Florida, Maryland, Texas, and Arizona) revealed that only 98 women held administrative positions at these colleges between 1973 and 1976. Of these, 51 were chairpersons and none were presidents. Most were in traditionally female disciplines, such as home economics and nursing, and only 20% held Doctorates of Philosophy. Discriminatory practices and attitudes contributing to this problem include invisible barriers, such as word-of-mouth recruitment techniques, and myths, such as the belief that women administrators are absent from their posts more often than males. Concrete steps should be taken to combat this situation at national, university, community college, and personal levels, e.g., support of legislation eliminating sex barriers, encouragement of women to attain advanced degrees, active recruitment of women for administrative positions, and encouragement of women to aggressively pursue administrative jobs. (JP)

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Increasing the Role of Women in Community College Administration

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Throughout American history, the role of women in education has been imbalanced and filled with obstacles. In colonial America, girls were excluded from formal education because it was felt that they could learn all they needed to know at home. During the eighteenth century, study in the dame schools became fashionable. These early female academies and seminaries concentrated heavily upon developing skills such as manners, music, or embroidery which were regarded as feminine and acceptable goals. Teaching in these dame schools became an acceptable occupation for women in financial need.

In the nineteenth century, with the emergence of the publicly supported common school, women finally began to gain real admittance to public education. This acceptance was in part because a cheap and readily available supply of teachers for the common schools was needed and the female population could be the source. During the latter part of the nineteenth century, drives for additional education for women were successful largely because they were frequently founded upon sexist arguments. For instance, a curriculum in home economics was argued to be a valued course of study for women because it prepared them in skills associated with their biological role. The justification of higher education for many women was often based on the premise that it provided future wives and mothers with a culture and knowledge that could benefit their entire families and of course they too would "have something to fall back on" should they divorce or be widowed.

Women in the 1970's find that equality of the sexes in the public school system and in administration is a legislated reality but that the practice is far more an illusion than a reality. In actuality, the education system is often structured in the pattern of the traditional home, with men running the institution and women working in it as teachers. A recent study showed that 85% of elementary teachers were women yet only 21% of elementary principles were women.[1] A national survey conducted in 1970-71 concluded that while 67% of all public school teachers were women, only 15% of all principals and 0.6% of all superintendents were women.[2] A study published in 1977 showed that 3% of the college and university presidents were women.[3]

One of the most spectacular changes in the American economy in the past quarter century has been the dramatic increase in the number and proportion of women who work for pay outside the home. Over the past 25 years the number of women in the labor force more than doubled, and in the last decade it increased by nearly two-fifths. In 1974 some 35 million women were in the labor force, representing 45% of all women 16 years of age and over, and nearly two out of every five persons in the entire work force.[4] (Table 1). A number of factors have contributed to the increased labor force participation of women, including the trend toward smaller numbers of children, the large increase in the number of families headed by women, and the increase in the life expectancy of women.[5]

Interaction between individual socialization patterns and the norms and standards of the larger society currently tend to reinforce differentiated sex roles. All human beings (whether male or female) come to have

Table 1. Employment Status of Women and Men, April 1974 (4)

	Population*	
	Total	Labor Force
Women	78,290,000 (100%)	32,229,000 (45%)
Men	71,993,000 (100%)	56,507,000 (78.5%)

*Persons 16 years of age and over.

needs and psychological predispositions which follow them through their adult life. These needs differ in ways that are largely dependent on the social environments in which males and females are reared.

Sociologists believe that individuals come to take on the attitudes, values, and behaviors expected of them.[6] The attitudes of individuals may or may not be discriminatory towards male and female roles. The discriminatory attitudes held by individuals (both male and female) are frequently reinforced by professional and societal structures, thus resulting in perpetuation of the status-quo in educational administration. Both women and men have been socialized to carry out roles that maintain the secondary status of women. A consistent image is projected that women are housewives, that they are passive, unambitious, supportive, and appreciative whereas men are daring, venturesome, active, and intelligent. An example of this socialization can be found in prime time network television programming. T.V. features few women in competent, assertive, independent, professional roles. The advertisements, too, continue to depict women as more inane than men.

The school setting, in terms of its total "hidden curriculum," merges with many other social forces in the family, the culture, and the national economy to influence the career decisions and life goals of both males and females. Textbooks in all subjects consistently under-represent females or depict them in passive and subordinate roles. Sex sterotyping and the role definition of both sexes is harmful. Society, including students, suffers from the under utilization of more than half the talents available to educational administration. Women who have found their way into administration have generally had to be deviant from the norm to be in administration training programs. The male students on the other hand have typically been more conforming, more compatible with the existing power structure, and more able to visualize themselves as part of the administration group. Often women in educational administration experience professional isolation.

An analysis of the findings of a study conducted in 1975 among female faculty and male administrators in post-secondary proprietary schools suggests that neither administrators nor female faculty view female faculty as being equal to male faculty. Over half the administrators and just under half of the female faculty surveyed agreed that, in their institutions, women were not as likely to achieve positions of leadership as were men. More than half the administrators felt, however, that women successfully competed with men at their institution, while more than half the female faculty disagreed.[7]

Position Levels for Women in Educational Administration

Current data from the Bureau on Women show that 3% of the presidents of colleges and universities are women yet little breakdown below that level has been completed. At what levels of administration are women involved? How many women are employed in the community college system with Ph.D.'s? How many of the women with Ph.D.'s are administrators? How many administrators in Arizona are women?

A study to answer the above research questions was conducted at the University of Arizona in 1979. Employment patterns in community colleges were examined to determine numbers of women in administrative positions. Data were collected from a randomly selected sample of five different states and in each of those states five different community college campus sites and from the 12 community colleges in Arizona. The years examined were 1973 to 1976. Administrative positions were examined to determine the gender of the person filling each position. The judgment of the researcher was necessary to determine in some cases whether the individual listed was in fact in an administrative role. Several indicators were employed. If the position was termed "administrative assistant," if no academic title was used, or if all categories in top administration were filled, the individual was not included as an administrator. No positions in support services such as grounds, maintenance, health services, bookstore, library, etc. were included. A summary of findings is presented in Table 2 and Table 3. All administrative roles illustrated in Tables 2 and 3 were academic positions only.

At What Levels of Administration Are Women Involved?

The national data show that 3% of college and university presidents are women. In this study, however, women were decidely not top level administrators. In 1/3 of the cases where women were administrators (see Tables 2 and 3), even those holding Ph.D.'s were not directors or deans. Instead, they were chairpersons. For the most part, women even in chairperson roles were in traditional female disciplines such as nursing and home economics. How many of the women employed in the community college system as administrators hold Ph.D.'s? Approximately 75% of all community college administrators hold Ph.D.'s, yet only 20% of the women in this study hold such degrees.

How Many Women Are Administrators in Arizona?

A comparison of data in Table 2 and Table 3 showed that women were more equally and more consistently represented in levels of administration in Arizona than in other parts of the country which were surveyed, yet there is still no female president in any of the insitutions represented in this study.

Table 2. Women in Community College Administrative Positions in Five States, 1973-1976.

State	Position				Total/State
	President	Director	Dean	Chairperson	
*A California	-	-	6	8	14 (13 M.A. 1 Ph.D.)
*B Illinois	-	2	3	0	5 (1 B.A., 1 M.A.)
*C Florida	-	-	6	15	21 (4 B.A., 6 M.A., 2 Ph.D. 7 not given)
*D Maryland	-	2	2	4	8 (3 M.A., 1 Ph.D., 4 not given)
*E Texas	-	4	6	12	22 (6 B.A., 11 M.A., 5 Ph.D.)
TOTAL/Position	-	8	23	39	

*A Includes Pasadena City College, Sacramento City College, San Jose City College, El Camino City College and Grossmont college.

*B Includes Joliet Junior College, Wright College, Thornton College, Illinois College and Olive Harvey College.

*C Includes Miami Date Community College, Florida Junior College, Broward Community College, Daytona Beach Community College and Pensacola Junior College.

*D Includes Western Maryland College, Essex Community College, Anne Arundel Community College, Montgomery College and Prince George's College.

*E Includes Tarrant County Junior College, San Jacinto College, El Paso Community College, Mountain View College and Eastfield College.

Table 3. Women in Community College Administrative Positions in Arizona, 1973-1976.

College	Position				Total/College
	President	Director	Dean	Chairperson	
Mohave	-	-	-	-	-
Phoenix	-	-	2	4	6 (3 M.A., 3 Ph.D.)
Arizona Western	-	-	-	1	1 (1 Ph.D.)
Glendale	-	-	1	4	5 (4 M.A., 1 Ph.D.)
Scottsdale	-	1	-	-	1 (1 M.A.)
Mesa	-	2	1	2	5 (2 M.A., 3 Ph.D.)
Central Arizona	-	2	2	-	4 (2 M.A., 2 Ph.D.)
Pima	-	2	-	-	2 (1 M.A., 1 Ph.D.)
Yavapai	-	1	-	-	1 (1 M.A.)
Cochise	-	2	-	-	2 (2 M.A.)
Northland Pioneer	-	-	-	-	-
Maricopa Tech.	-	-	-	1	1 (M.A.)
TOTAL/Position	-	10	6	12	

Why Are Women Poorly Represented In Educational Administration?

Women have played a great role in public education but their role has almost exclusively been in teaching positions. Women have always been under-represented in educational administration. The numbers of women in administration have declined in recent years. There are fewer women superintendents today than there were ten years ago, fewer women principals, fewer women professors, and fewer women college presidents.[8] Nationally women are joining the administrative field slowly and not in proportion to the increase in total numbers of administrative positions. Atlhough women nationally constituted 67% of the public education teaching profession, only 16% of the administrative positions in public education are occupied by women.[9]

Many reasons are given for the lack of women in educational administration - largely myths. A workshop was held in Michigan in 1975 to explore attitudes of male and female school administrators. The possible cause of the lack of women in administrative positions was attributed to sex discrimination and sexist attitudes that exist in employment practices of most school districts.[10]

Some reasons for the lack of women in administration were cited by Gretchen Niedermayer in her position paper entitled "Women in Administrative Positions in Public Education." She said that there are many "invisible" barriers. Some of the barriers she cited were:

1. recruitment techniques
   Often the opening is spread by word of mouth, men telling other men about the position.

2. criteria for selection
   Many times tradition dictates that the dean also have male athletics in his/her background.

3. selection committee composition
   Committes dominated by men will probably select men.

4. language of job description and forms
   Terms like we want the best "man" for the job will tend to limit the selection to male candidates.

5. job progressions
   Often the school will promote from within, yet the "normal" career ladder for a women may be different than for a "man."

6. different job titles and prestige but similar duties
   If the position is held by a woman the duties might be the same as a man's yet she may not be recognized as performing that duty.

In addition to many socialization factors of role concepts and invisible barriers, many myths, beliefs, and attitudes still exist concerning women in

administration which offer obstacles to their admittance. Some of the most commonly held myths are:

1. Women administrators are absent from their post of duty more than men.
2. Women administrators are transient.
3. Women should not aspire for administration jobs.
4. There are too many women in teaching so we need men in administration.
5. Women are too emotional to be administrators.
6. Women prefer a man for a boss.

Recommendations To Improve the Numbers and Percent of Women in Educational Administration

Concrete steps must be taken to remedy the present imbalance. Generally, we need to keep an open line of communication between institutions of higher learning and local districts to see if an available pool of prepared female individuals exist.

National and International Level

1. Professional associations should give publicity to women in school administration.

2. All professional teacher/administrator associations should encourage and support legislation and policy decisions to eliminate sex related barriers that may be impeding highly qualified and talented women and men from entering certain fields or positions.

University Level

3. All universities should encourage women to obtain advanced degrees with a goal toward preparing for administrative positions.

4. University professors should encourage women to seek employment in leadership roles in community college administration.

Local Community College Level

5. The community college should facilitate the continuing study of each capable female.

6. Colleges should actively recruit applications from women for administrative positions.

7. Colleges should select the best administrator from available candidates regardless of their sex.

8. In-service and pre-service training should be provided to all school personnel on how their jobs relate to other functions within the school's employment duties and responsibilities.

9. Communication techniques and parameters for personal growth and development on the job need to be conducted to eradicate current misconceptions that exist regarding the dual-role conflict, advancement possibilities, and professional aspirations of the female administrator.

10. More women should be put on screening committees.

11. Each community college should develop projects which analyze and eliminate sexism in existing programs.

12. Each community college should form a Sexism Awareness Task Force Citizen Group to call attention to the existence of sexist attitudes and to evaluate objectives and goals for elimination of sexism.

13. Each community college should identify qualified female faculty who would be eligible for administration positions.

14. The present female administrators should be put into more visible leadership roles.

15. An in-service program for local administrators should be conducted to discuss problems of sexism.

<u>On the Personal Level</u>

16. Women require interpersonal encouragement and support because many women do not yet trust their own abilities.

17. Women should be made aware of career opportunities in administration.

18. Women should be encouraged to be aggressive in their fight for administrative roles.

Two facts emerge clearly from the available figures on women in administrative roles. Men dominate in all positions. The percent of women in administration is on the decline. The time is right for women to assert themselves in leadership positions and to view themselves as a new and powerful creative force for social change. The liberation of women and men would be empty indeed if it did not lead to genuine cooperation and full partnership between men and women, for the full contribution of both is necessary to enhance the quality of American life.

Men as the gatekeepers to the profession of school administration are doing an increasingly effective job of closing the doors to the sacrosanct chambers of administration. The doors will be opened only through the successful efforts of those people who believe that the job of managing our colleges is too important a task to be delegated on the basis of sex.

Whether or not to work, and when and where, should be each man's and each woman's choice, whether or not they are parents, married or single.

There should be no societal pressures of prescriptions regarding these choices. A person is born female or male and anything they want to do or to be should be acceptable.

Because of current socialization patterns, the woman administrator of the future who rises to the top could bring about changes in the way the role of administrator is carried out. Administration could be redefined to accommodate attributes typically described as female, such as: first, a deep concern about humanity and human values; second, the qualification of sophisticated understanding of social, economic, and political elements and problems of our times, including an understanding of the relation of her own work to that setting; third, humility, which implies great tolerance of other persons and their ideas; fourth, an ability to communicate with others; and fifth, a willingness to be mobile--within a school system, between school systems and in other ways.[11]

As American moves toward a more humanistic society, equality takes different forms. When Thomas Jefferson wrote of equality, he was certainly thinking of political equality.[12] By the nineteenth century, equality came to mean equality of opportunity, and an equal start in a competitive struggle. It is possible that in the near future equality will also mean equality between the sexes, by virture of the proposed Equal Rights Amendment. Under this Amendment, biological differences between men and women will not be recognized and both men and women will have equal rights under the law and equal opportunity to be free.

FOOTNOTES

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